

Uncle Sam Plantation,  
Convent, St. James Parish,  
Louisiana.

HABS No. LA-74 HABS  
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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Louisiana

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
CENTRAL UNIT—ST. LOUIS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Richard Koch, District Officer  
908 Queen & Crescent Bldg., New Orleans, La.

## UNCLE SAM PLANTATION

1.1 mile North of Convent, St. James Parish, Louisiana.

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Physical Data

Present owner: W. J. Stebbins, Garyville, La.

Present occupant and use: Negroes occupy some of the old slave shacks.

Description (present condition)

Wall construction: Pigeonniers, common bond brick; main house, garconnieres and offices, common bond brick stuccoed.

Size and form: Main house, 93' x 83'-8"; offices, 55'-3" x 22'-4"; garconnieres, 65'-9" x 42'-6"; pigeonniers, hexagonal, 8'-3" face.

Number stories: Main house, 2½; offices, 1; garconnieres, 1½; pigeonniers, 2.

Porches: Main house, 2 story porch on four sides; garconnieres and offices, 1 story porch front and rear. All porches; first floor, cement on brick; second floor, wood.

Exterior openings, windows: Main house, second floor, triple hung sash with weights; dormers, double hung sash with weights. Garconnieres, offices, pigeonniers, double hung sash with weights.

Exterior openings, doors: Main house, French doors first floor, with entrance hall doors panelled and with sidelights; second floor, hall doors to porch, panelled, with sidelights and transom. Garconnieres, entrance doors to hall panelled, others are French doors with transoms. Offices, French doors. Pigeonniers, batten doors.

Cornice: Galvanized iron.

Roofs: Main house, garconnieres, pigeonniers, hipped; offices, gabled.

Roofing: Galvanized iron over original wood shingles.

Chimneys: Brick, stuccoed.

Interior

Floors: 6" cypress hoards.

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Doors: Cypress, four panels.

Trim: Cypress, mitered, Greek type.

Mantels: Marble mantels in main house with coal burning grates. Evidence indicates larger wood burning fireplaces originally. Wood mantels in garconnières are classical with heavy proportions.

Stairways: Main house hall stair, turned walnut newel post and balusters, walnut handrail; service stair and garconniere stairs enclosed.

Plastering: Main house, run moulded plaster cornices.

Additions and alterations: Metal cornice, roof, ventilators and finials. Coal burning grates. Corrugated metal tank replaced wood portion of cisterns.

Outbuildings: One stable, a carriage house, a barn and stable combined, blacksmith shop, foreman's house, twenty-one slave houses and three houses probably occupied by white workmen still stand, all in a poor condition. All these structures are of frame construction except the blacksmith shop which is brick. Brick foundations of a slave hospital, sugar mill, sugar house, and of one unidentified house remain.

Various frame outhouses of poor construction clutter the immediate grounds of the main house, one shack being directly attached to the south garconniere.

#### Historical Data

Year of erection: Main house and garconnières built in 1837.\* The main house burned and was rebuilt in 1849; its walls may be original.

Built for (first owner): Samuel Fagot.

Architect or designer: Not ascertained.

Built by: Not ascertained.

Original intended use: Sugar cane plantation.

Notable events and occupants:

Due to encroachment of the Mississippi upon the levee bordering the plantation, demolition of the main group of

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buildings began in March of 1940. The main house, garcon-  
nieres, offices and pigeonniers as well as a stable and  
carriage house were all marked for removal.

The slave hospital, sugar mill and other unidentified  
buildings were destroyed previously with only their footings  
remaining.

One of the most extensive of Louisiana sugar cane  
plantations, it included 1900 acres originally. Mighty oaks  
that once graced the front lawn have been devoured by the  
ever approaching river.

Samuel Fagot, the original owner, died shortly before  
the Civil War, leaving the plantation to his widow who lived  
until the 1870's. Management of the field and mill was  
handled by Lucien Malus, Fagot's son-in-law. Malus died a  
few years after his mother-in-law and the property then went  
over to the Jacobs brothers, Jules and Camille, who married  
the two daughters of Malus and Felicie Fagot.

Malus helped to preserve and restore the plantation and  
the Jacobs brothers introduced modern machinery and practiced  
principles of soil conservation.

Shortly after the turn of the century Jules Jacobs bought  
out his brother and in 1915 sold the manor to a New Orleans  
commission merchant.

## References:

Article in "The Times-Picayune New Orleans States",  
March 10, 1940, by Joseph Lucia.

\*Lyle Saxon, "Old Louisiana", pp.301-2 states, "It dates  
from 1836."

\*Following is an excerpt from a letter to F. Ray Leim-  
kuehler from Mr. Richard Koch under date of October 7, 1940:

"I located Mr. Waldo (Eduard T. Waldo, great  
grandson of the original owner) who tells me that the  
first house at Uncle Sam Plantation was commenced in  
1837, which would be the date of the pigeonnieres.  
During the course of construction there was a fire and  
the house that was recently torn down was finished  
about 1850."

Prepared by Joseph P. Marlow September, 1940.  
Joseph P. Marlow, Junior Architect,  
Historic American Buildings Survey.

Approved: Gene Fick  
District Officer

Date Dec. 10, 1940

12/16/40